

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife

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HICKEL HAILS DECISION BY STATE WILDLIFE AGENCIES TO PROTECT ENDANGERED COLUMBIAN WHITE-TAILED DEER

Secretary of the Interior Walter J. Hickel today praised Oregon and Washington wildlife departments for closing the 1970 deer hunting season in areas along the lower Columbia River to protect the endangered Columbian white-tailed deer.

The decision was made because of difficulty in distinguishing the Columbian from other whitetails. The Interior Department lists the Columbian as a subspecies threatened with extinction, primarily because land development has depleted available habitat. Its numbers have dwindled to 300 to 400.

Secretary Hickel hailed both States for "cooperation between their wildlife agencies and the Interior Department in protecting an endangered animal while allowing hunting of abundant species. This type of action must become customary in America if we are to make environmental responsibility a national ethic."

- This species avoids upland areas, preferring brushy lowlands along the Columbia. Agricultural and industrial inroads have decreased this habitat that never was too abundant.

The Columbian differs from the typical whitetail mainly in coloration, having little or no black and much white.

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